



2005 Staying Connected Grant Program

Guidelines for Technology Training Grants

Staying Connected Technology Training grants are competitive grants intended to provide funds for advanced training of public library technology staff. Libraries must designate a staff member or staff members to receive the training and submit an application that describes, in detail, why that staff member was chosen, the training desired, and the expected impact of that training on the staff member, the delivery of services to library clients, and his/her ability to assist the library in sustaining public access to technology.

The staff member designated to receive training should be either full-time technology staff or a significant portion of his/her job duties should be related to technology (management, troubleshooting, etc.) If the library wishes to designate multiple staff members for training, separate applications will be required for each staff member. The library director, systems administrator, or immediate supervisor should complete the application in conjunction with the designated staff member. The library director and the designated staff member must sign the application. Application forms are provided. **The deadline for applications for 2005 technology training grants is March 15, 2005.**

Each technology training grant application will be evaluated based on the information provided in the application. Application does not guarantee an award. The training desired should make a significant impact on the ability of the staff member to assist the library in the daily management of its technology and the sustainability of public access to technology. Factors used to determine an award will include:

- The staff member's current job duties
- The staff member's length of employment
- The justification provided as to why the specific staff member was chosen to receive training
- Description of the desired course, courses, or program
- Who/what organization will provide the training
- Proposed dates of training
- Description of the expected impact of training on the ability of this staff member to perform his/her job duties related to technology and to improve library services to clients

Technology training grants will be implemented through reimbursement. The grant recipient is the library, not an individual staff member; however, the library must designate a staff member to receive the training in order to apply.

The library will be required to contribute 20% toward the total cost of the class, classes, or program OR in lieu of the library's monetary contribution, the employee may choose to guarantee continued employment with the library for a period not less than 18 months AFTER the completion of the training. (Reasonable accommodations will be made for those who choose the employment

guarantee, but find it necessary to leave the library within the 18 months.) The decision for monetary contribution or employment guarantee rests solely with the library's director and designated employee. If the library director is the employee seeking training, the library's Board chair must be consulted.

The designated staff member should be prepared to begin training program immediately or within a reasonable period of time after award notification. If a staff member does not register for or begin training within 3 months, the grant award will be considered forfeit.

A single course, set of courses, or a certification program may be requested, but all courses must directly relate to the management of technology. The Gates Training Initiative in 2002-2003 provided more than 100 free courses to public library staff for software applications, such as Microsoft Word, Excel, Publisher, etc. The Staying Connected training grants are intended for advanced technology training, therefore, software applications courses related to an office environment, such as word processing, spreadsheets, presentation software, etc. are not acceptable uses of Staying Connected training grant funds. Software related to database management (i.e. skills for SQL, Oracle, etc.) would be acceptable, but should clearly be related to the library's automation system or other library technology-related activities.

Upon completion of training, invoices and proof of attendance (certificate of completion, transcript, etc.) will be required for reimbursement. **The deadline for the submission of invoices for the 2004 technology training is June 1, 2006.** However, if training can be completed and invoices are available and dated **prior** to June 1, 2005, they may be submitted by June 1, 2005 for reimbursement in FY05.

After completing training, the staff member will be required to evaluate the training received. Both the staff member and library director (or Board chair if the library director is the staff member who received training) will be required to fill out evaluation forms.

Another evaluation will be done six months after training has been completed to assess the long-term impact of the training.

FAQ's

Who may apply for Staying Connected Technology Training Grants?

Any South Carolina public library can apply, designating an appropriate staff member to receive training.

What staff is eligible to attend training?

Staff members designated to attend training should be either full time technology staff or a significant portion of his/her job duties should be related to technology.

Are the counties divided in tier groups as they are in the Hardware/Software Replacement grants?

No. All counties are eligible to apply for technology-training grants.

Does the application guarantee our library a technology-training grant?

No. The Staying Connected Technology Training grants are competitive. Applications will be evaluated based on information provided in the applications.

When are applications due?

Applications are due for the 2005 round of grants by March 15, 2005.

Will the library receive grant money up front?

No. Training grants will be implemented through a reimbursement program.

What information is required in order to receive reimbursement?

The library should submit a Request for Reimbursement form along with invoices or receipts that indicate payment has been made for the training indicated in the application. Proof of attendance and completion of training should also be submitted.

Is the library required to match any of the grant funds?

Yes. The library must assume at least 20% of the total cost of training, including registration, testing, lodging, and transportation costs.

What if the library cannot afford to match the 20%?

The library staff member, in agreement with the library director (or board chair if the library director is the staff member attending training), can choose to provide a guarantee of continued employment instead of the 20% monetary match. The staff member must agree to remain employed with the library for a period not less than 18 months after the completion of the training.

What if the designated employee cannot fulfill the 18 months commitment after the training has been taken?

Reasonable accommodations will be made for those who choose the employment guarantee, but find it necessary to leave the library within the 18 months for extenuating circumstances (such as death, illness, etc.), however, if the staff member chooses to leave the employment of the library and no such circumstances exist, the library may be required to reimburse the South Carolina State Library for the cost of training. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis. If possible, the South Carolina State Library should be notified of the extenuating circumstances at least two weeks prior to the employees' last day. If prior notification is not possible, SCSL should be notified within two weeks of the employees' departure.

What if the employee is terminated during the 18-month employment guarantee?

The South Carolina State Library should be notified within two weeks of the termination. The grant recipient library may be required to reimburse SCSL for the training funds, but this will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

What kind of proof of attendance and completion is acceptable?

A certificate of completion from the training vendor or organization or transcripts from the training vendor or organization would be acceptable proof of completion. A letter on letterhead from the training vendor or organization, complete with signature from the instructor or official representative of the training vendor or organization would also be acceptable.

To whom to we submit applications?

Applications for technology training grants funded by the Staying Connected Grant program should be submitted to South Carolina State Library, ATTN: Felicia Vereen, P.O. Box 11469, Columbia, SC 29211.

Will applications be accepted by email?

No. Signatures of both the library director (or Board chair) and the designated staff member are required before applications will be considered. Unofficial applications may be faxed in order to meet the submission deadline, but an official application packet that includes one (1) original and two (2) copies are required before the application will be evaluated.

Submit applications for the Staying Connected Technology Training Grants to:

*South Carolina State Library
ATTN: Felicia Vereen
P.O. Box 11469
Columbia, SC 29211*

NOTE: No applications will be accepted by email. Unofficial faxed submissions are acceptable to meet the submission deadline. An official application packet that includes one (1) original copy of the application forms, with signatures of both the library director (or Board chair) and designated staff member, and two (2) copies are required before the application will be evaluated.

Contact Felicia Vereen at 803-734-8645 or feliciav@leo.scsl.state.sc.us with questions about the Staying Connected Technology Training grants.